

NO MAN IS AN ISLAND, ESPECIALLY AROUND  
HOLLYWOOD PARK

well, I use valet parking at the track, it's only  
2 bucks more than preferred  
and I'm usually late, hungover, and  
I leave the machine there, right at the entrance:  
one only needs a planned and reasonable  
divinity  
to continue to pass through the  
fire.

the valets see me every day so they know I'm a  
regular, some kind of special  
nut.  
but I've held my communication to a  
minimal and polite  
level,  
my only reference to their  
genuine alacrity  
and humanity  
being the daily buck tip  
I slip to the man who tools up  
old IHRS 291,  
which is about the time  
they are putting them in the gate  
for the last  
race  
and there's nobody about except me  
and the valets.

now, of late, the fellows  
have been asking  
in a curious manner  
about those strange cigarettes upon the  
dash  
and I inform each of them that  
they are  
erala dinesh beedies  
from India  
rolled and made from the  
betel leaf.

one afternoon  
after having myself an excellent  
\$425 day  
the valet who brought the car  
nodded toward the  
dash, asked, "hey, mind if I try  
one of those?"



"not at all," I said, "and here, give some  
to your buddies ...."  
and I handed him a  
pack.

then I stalled, fastening my  
seat belt, putting on my driving  
glasses, adjusting the side mirror, turning  
on the radio.  
and when I looked over before  
leaving  
there were the 8 or 9 valets  
sitting on the long yellow  
bench, each puffing on an  
erala dinesh beedie.  
"get high, fuckers!" I yelled  
and as a group  
they all waved  
laughing

and I cut right  
up the exit lane  
thinking, there are things more  
important than beating the  
horses, really,  
but not much more  
important.

#### THE TAX CONSULTANT

he arrived, brisk, with briefcase, highly recommended, he  
sat on the couch and began his song;  
I disliked him right off, made a few off remarks about  
him.  
he leaped up, grabbed his briefcase and ran out the  
door.

"you hurt his feelings," said my  
lady.

"he'll be back," I  
said.

the door opened, he flung himself across the room and  
was again on the couch with his  
briefcase, talking  
again.

I listened further; decided to let him have a go at my  
finances -- he could be good at what he did even if he